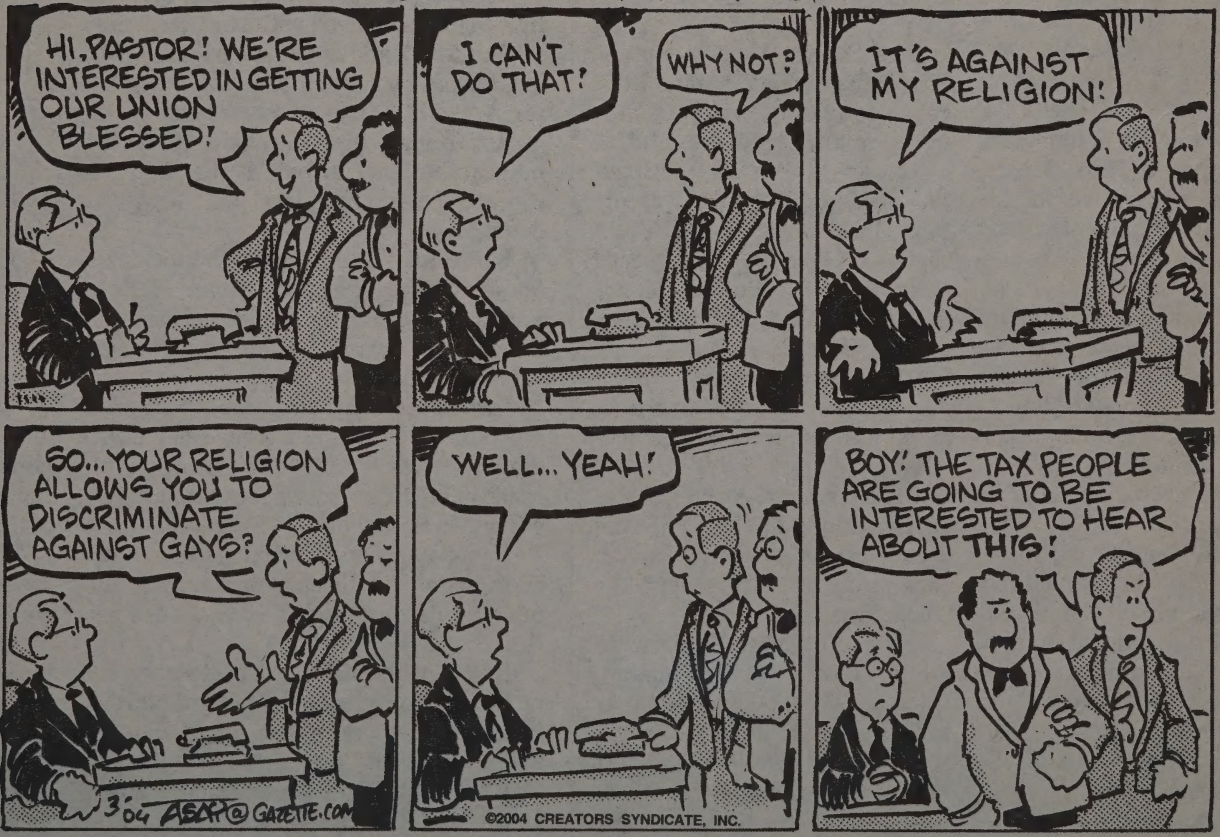
Gazette 3/11/04

ASAY'S VIEW

COMING SOON TO AMERICA?


HI, PASTOR! WE'RE INTERESTED IN GETTING OUR UNION BLESSED!
I CAN'T DO THAT!
WHY NOT?
IT'S AGAINST MY RELIGION!
SO... YOUR RELIGION ALLOWS YOU TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST GAYS?
WELL... YEAH!
BOY! THE TAX PEOPLE ARE GOING TO BE INTERESTED TO HEAR ABOUT THIS!
3-04 ASAY@GAZETTE.COM
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CHUCK ASAY, THE GAZETTE

lan merger

ee departments could unite in '06

By JANE REUTER
THE GAZETTE

herger of three northern so County fire depart-, which has had its fits arts during the past year, taking shape Wednes-

e Woodmoor Monument onald Wescott fire dis- along with the Palmer Fire Department, plan to vote on becoming a sin- partment by 2006.

e vote probably would be ng 2005.

e Tri-Lakes Fire Protec- istrict, which helped pay 002 study on the idea, is rt of the planned merger, was announced by the moor Monument and d Wescott fire boards. kes dropped out of the ations in June.

e proposal calls for financ- he new district with a ty tax levy of 7 mills.

The Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department's annual budget is $48,000, which comes from the town's general fund.

Under the plan outlined Wednesday, Donald Wescott Fire Chief Bill Sheldon would serve as the new district's chief, and Woodmoor Monument Fire Chief David Youtsey as its deputy chief.

The merger study, which cost $30,000, was adamant in its conclusion: a merger is necessary.

"The boundaries and fire station locations of the Tri-Lakes area fire departments are a case study in inefficiency," the consultant said.

Last summer's efforts to merge Woodmoor Monument, Donald Wescott and Palmer Lake appeared to be gathering steam when Donald Wescott bowed out, saying the process was moving too quickly. Last fall, Palmer Lake Town Board

Stable environment helps foste

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EVANS • Danea Ficek remembers the first night she stayed with her new family.

She was 7 and spent the evening playing Barbies with her soon-to-be big sister, Amanda, who is five years older.

Ask Danea, now 12, about the foster homes she lived in before that and she sighs: "There are just too many to count."

She went through more than a dozen homes before Jone and Glenn Ficek of Evans adopted her. Danea entered the foster-care system filthy and hungry when she was 1.

Two years later, after she returned to her father's care, she watched her father die. She was in his car during a car crash. The other driver shot him after he got out to talk to him.

Danea and her two siblings then had a short reunion with their mother, who terminated parental rights when Danea was 5.

By then, the little girl was angry and needy. A psychological report read, "Danea clearly views the world as a sad and scary place."

Early reports suggested Danea's intelligence was below normal. Standardized test reports now show she places in the

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